Scheme for fellowships to SC/ST students

178. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Centre has approved a new central scheme for providing fellowships to SCs/STs to pursue higher studies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) which is the nodal agency for implementation of this scheme; and

(d) the action plan of Government to give due publicity of this scheme to help the SCs/STs of the tribal-dominated Orissa region to reap its benefits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Two New Central Sector Schemes namely 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship' (RGNF) for Scheduled Caste Students and 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship' for Scheduled Tribe students for pursuing higher studies leading to M.Phil. and Ph.D. have been introduced during the current financial year 2005-06.

(b) Any student belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes category admitted to M.Phil./Ph.D. degree in a University or academic institution will be eligible for the award of the Fellowship. The tenure of Fellowship will be for five years, two years for Junior Research Fellowship and three years as Senior Research Fellowship subject to satisfactory progress of Research work. A total of 2000 fellowships (1333 for SCs and 667 for STs) will be awarded per year during the Xth Plan Period.

(c) and (d) UGC is the nodal agency for implementing the scheme and will give wide publicity to the scheme to invite applications.

Schemes for women tribals in Andhra Pradesh

179. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of schemes existing for women tribals in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the allocation made for each scheme;

(c) the number of beneficiaries in each scheme, amount-wise;

(d) whether funds have been misused in any scheme;